

DEEP



WIDE

v GROUP STUDY



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Deep & Wide: vGroup Study

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WIDE-HOSPITALITY

Hospitality seems to be a habit and practice of a bygone era. Often when we think about hospitality, we think of the 1950s when everyone knew their neighbors and you felt free and obligated to invite them into your house. Today people are extremely segmented. Many of us do not know our neighbors and would not invite them into our houses, let alone a stranger. Similarly, COVID has definitely changed things. Not only do we not want to invite a neighbor into our house, we currently do not want to invite our friends into our home. We simply do not know who has and who doesn't have the virus.

But the Scriptures are chocked full of not only examples of hospitality, but commands to be hospitable. Paul writes in Romans 12:13 "Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality." Peter urges the church to "show hospitality to one another without grumbling" (1 Peter 4:9). The author of Hebrews challenges the church to "not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares" (Hebrews 13:2). No doubt, hospitality in the ancient world, and especially in the church, was important. There were no rest stops or hotels. The safest place to be was in the home of someone you trusted. In order for that to happen, people had to practice hospitality. So, what should this mean for us today?

- How would you define or describe hospitality in your own words?
- What has your experience(s) of hospitality been like?
- As we begin to implement hospitality as a wide spiritual habit, what do you believe are or will be your hindrances?

While there are countless passages we could turn to to discuss hospitality, we're going to look at a passage that provides a unique perspective to hospitality.

¹He entered Jericho and was passing through. ²And behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus. He was a chief tax collector and was rich. ³And he was seeking to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was small in stature. ⁴So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him, for he was about to pass that way. ⁵And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today." ⁶So he hurried and came down and received

him joyfully. ⁷And when they saw it, they all grumbled, "He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner." ⁸And Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor. And if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold." ⁹And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham. ¹⁰For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."

Luke 19:1-10

- How is Zacchaeus described in this passage? How could that have affected hospitality?
- How does Zacchaeus respond to Jesus' request? Regarding hospitality, what lessons can we learn from his response?
- Luke writes that Zacchaeus "received him (Jesus) joyfully." The verb "receive" is the biblical word for hospitality. What do you think it practically looks like to receive someone joyfully?
- What does Jesus teach us about hospitality by going into the home of Zacchaeus?
- Zacchaeus promises Jesus generosity after exploiting and robbing so many. How should generosity be associated with hospitality?
- At the end of this story, Jesus declares, "Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost." How does salvation offered by Jesus actually serve as the foundation for our hospitality to others? (Hint: Think about our status with God prior to our salvation).

The story of Jesus and Zacchaeus is so interesting. Jesus practically forces Zacchaeus to be hospitable. Despite his hospitality, Zacchaeus is judged by the religious. By the end, Jesus himself has exercised hospitality by welcoming Zacchaeus into the family of God. Many of us have one image of what hospitality looks like, but this story demonstrates what true hospitality should be like. Hospitality is more than just cleaning your house, opening it up to others, and serving a meal. Hospitality is about opening your life to others and ultimately extending the grace of Jesus to them.

- As you plan to be hospitable, what do you have that you can share with others?

- Who are 2-3 individuals and/or families you can be hospitable to?

- What is your first step you need to take to practice hospitality?